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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/312,737 05/14/99 WELLS

E



PM82/0728



EXAMINER

DOUGHERTY, J

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720 AMERICAN BANK PLAZA  
CORPUS CHRISTI TX 78475

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3672

DATE MAILED: 07/28/00

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

**Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks**

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/312,737

Applicant(s)

WELLS, EDWARD A.

Examiner

Jennifer R. Dougherty

Art Unit

3672

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 May 1999.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 22-24 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 10, 11-13, 17, 20, and 25-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3-9, 14-16, 18, 19, and 21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 May 1999 is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been:
1. ☐ received.
2. ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code / Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. & 119(e).

## Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 16) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 17) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.

- 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 20) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: 26. Correction is required.
2. The drawings are objected to because figure 9 is not labeled. Correction is required.

### ***Specification***

3. The title of the invention is not commensurate with the scope of the invention. A new title is required that is clearly indicative that the claims are directed to a method as well as an apparatus.

### ***Claim Objections***

4. Claim 19 is objected to because of the following informalities: in line 2 "seconds" should be changed to "sections". Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

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A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1, 2, 10, 17, 20, and 26-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Montgomery.

The gas lift of Montgomery includes all the limitations of claims 1, 2, 10, 17, 20, and 26-30 including: a piston with an upper and lower section (30; figures 1A-1D), exterior seals (31), a catcher (column 2, lines 31-37), a release/decoupler (column 5, lines 18-22), and the method of using the gas lift (column 4, line 61-column 5, line 22).

7. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Isaacks.

The plunger lift system of Isaacks includes all the limitations of claim 25 including: a master valve (23), a receiver (30), wing valve (28), and bypass conduit (39).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montgomery in view of Dinning.

The gas lift of Montgomery includes all the limitations of claims 11-13, as discussed above with the exception of including the bumper spring. Dinning teaches a similar fluid-lifting piston device. The device of Dinning includes a bumper piston (2) provided

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to stop the downward movement of the piston, which is well known in the art.

Montgomery has no device to perform this necessary function. Thus it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have included the bumper spring which is taught by Dinning and common in the art in the gas lift of Montgomery in order to stop the piston at the bottom of the well.

### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

10. Claims 22-24 are allowed.
11. Claims 3-9, 14-16, 18, 19, and 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

### ***Conclusion***

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Gregston and Griffin show the state of the art with respect to plunger lift systems.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer Dougherty whose telephone number is (703) 308-6365. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM (EST).


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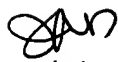
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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell, can be reached on (703) 308-2151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 305-3597.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

  
DAVID BAGNELL  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

  
jrd

July 21, 2000